

wake crushing interest rates. They seem also to be suggesting something which seems a little difficult, to increase spending while reducing the deficit. That is quite a trick. It reminds me of the difficulty of trying to suck and whistle at the same time, or in fact the definition of a politician. The definition of a politician is one who wants to sit on the fence and who, at the same time, wants to keep his ear to the ground. It seems to me that is the same kind of policy of the Tory opposition, which wants to increase spending and, at the same time, reduce the deficit, jacking up interest rates and reducing inflation.

In times of decision about economics I think one has to keep one's balance and not be lured into simplistic, unilateral, extremist or drastic actions. One gets all kinds of self-contradictory and conflicting advice on economics, and not only from the opposition parties. Whenever you turn on the radio or the television, or you look at your newspaper, you see editorials or articles by various experts on finance in the financial section giving all kinds of contradictory advice. We get it from the other side of the House from both parties, and we get it as you and I look at our own television, newspaper, or when listening to the radio. There are quite a few different kinds of solutions to our world problems.

This reminds one of what President Truman said after he had met with his cabinet for quite some time. Having met with his cabinet and after months of discussion about what to do about the American economy he threw his hands in the air and said, "Oh Lord, just give me a one-armed economist". He was asked why he wanted a one-armed economist and he said "because all I hear is on the one hand this, and on the other hand that". It seems to me we are getting advice of this kind—on the one hand do this and on the other hand do that. The trouble is the advice is in two opposite directions. Perhaps, I suggest, as has been said by other members of the government party this evening, we should try to look and realize that this is not a simple problem; the jug is half empty and the jug is half full. If the opposition wants to see that it is empty it can concentrate on that.

I have heard people say, for example, we have a large number of unemployed. They do not speak about the fact that Canada has the finest rate of employment of any country per capita on this earth, that for year after year after year we have provided a larger number of jobs per capita than any other nation on earth. I can say that very simply because, while it may be too difficult for some members of the opposition in their simplistic way to look only at the half-empty bottle and look at the question of what is not there, they should instead also look at the fact that there is a demographic bulge in Canada's working group, a great number who have come on the market looking for jobs. But Canada has succeeded in dealing more effectively with that kind of a bulge than any other nation on earth.

I think another example of simplicity, of not looking at the half-whole side of things is, for example, our trade picture. We hear the doom, gloom, and grief about what is wrong. I think that Canadians who hear us debate are entitled to know that their country also has some things worthy of boasting about.

### *Economic Conditions*

Look at the trade picture in recent times. Just for a moment contemplate the fact that the merchandise trade balance posted a surplus of \$658 million in October. Moreover, in the first ten months of this year the surplus of trade amounted to \$5.7 billion, up from \$2.7 billion over the corresponding period last year. This record high trade surplus has contributed to a substantial improvement in Canada's current account balance in the third quarter, an improvement of over \$900 million—that is almost one billion—from the previous quarter. I am not even talking about years, but over the past quarter.

That is a way of looking at some of the positive side of things. One can also look, I would suggest, at how we compare with other nations. When I go to hospitals to visit a friend I come to think of myself as much more fortunate after I have seen that friend in hospital; I think how well off I am. Until then I may have been feeling somewhat sorry for myself.

When I look in fact at other parts of the world I realize that the problems Canada has are not simply some that are Canadian made. I understand in fact that these problems exist in other places as well and that we share a problem which has been affecting the entire world, particularly since 1973 and the OPEC oil situation. Oil was \$2 a barrel, was suddenly jacked up to \$12 in 1973-74, but is now selling anywhere from \$36 to \$40 a barrel. You cannot, therefore, say that the present world situation and its economy will anywhere resemble what it did in 1973. But it resembles much more, here in Canada, what it did then than it does in other countries.

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When we look at other nations and at our problems, I think we can say that we do have problems but let us understand them in their world setting, and let us appreciate the fact that Canada's record is much stronger than that of many of the nations we so often refer to with envy.

Let us look at the downward pressure on the Canadian dollar recently. Although the United States dollar has appreciated 4.1 per cent against the Canadian dollar since the end of last June, let us also keep in mind that the United States dollar has been strong against most other major currencies as well. Since the end of June the United States dollar has risen 12.7 per cent against the French franc. It has risen 13 per cent against the German mark compared with 4.1 per cent against the Canadian dollar. The American dollar has appreciated 11.3 per cent against the Swiss franc and 12.9 per cent against the Italian lira, compared with 4.1 per cent against the Canadian dollar.

As I said, we can look at the gloomy side, but we can also look at the positive side. When we, as Canadians, look at the cost of gasoline or food in other countries, or their rates of inflation, I think we can feel that we do not have to hear only about gloom and doom. If we do not feel inclined to panic, I suggest that that will be a sign of maturity because Canada has seen a wild fluctuation in ups and downs on the economic scene in the United States during the past year, and for us to panic at this point, instead of continuing on a sound and steady policy, would do this country a grave disservice.